

		AGENDA ITEM 5
		PAF/03/14
Committee:	People and Families Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	16 January 2014	
<u>Ageing Well Task & Finish Group – responses of Cabinet Members</u>		
Enquiries to:	Robert Fox Scrutiny Officer Corporate Law & Assurance 01245 430526 robert.fox@essex.gov.uk	

Purpose of the Paper:

To review the responses from Cabinet Members to the report produced by the Ageing Well Task & Finish Group. (Original report circulated as PAF/02/14.)

Response to the Ageing Well Scrutiny Board Report

Theme	Recommendation	Cabinet Member	ECC Response	Current position
Highways and Transportation	1) Data regarding falls and their severity should be recorded, while recognising that many are not reported, to ensure better maintenance of footways	Cllr Rodney Bass, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation	Disagree	We are already recording and referring to data on the number of falls as it is included in the Key Performance Indicators; on the Corporate Plan progress report under Outcome 2, 'Protecting Essex residents from harm and injury', we measure 4.2.1.1: Hospital admissions due to falls for people aged 65 years and over (per 100,000 pop), and 4.2.1.2: Hospital admissions due to fall injuries for people aged 65 years and over (per 100,000 pop). The severity of falls is more difficult to record in a consistent way as this would be dependent on each A&E/ doctors surgery. We are unlikely to influence national KPI's to include this.
	2) There should be data gathered on pedestrian foot journeys to map priority pedestrian routes throughout the county. This could be undertaken by local community groups	Cllr Rodney Bass, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation	Can be investigated	<p>This would be very useful, but effective and representative monitoring of pedestrian journeys is difficult and costly since it requires manually counting of pedestrians or interviewing members of the public to discuss recent journeys. Resources are unlikely to be available to cover the entire County. The use of community groups to gather this data can be investigated, but measures will need to be taken to ensure a standardised and consistent approach to data gathering across the County.</p> <p>Pedestrian journeys are most likely to be less than a mile, and focussed around certain destinations such as local shops, schools, railway stations, bus stops etc. The largest numbers of pedestrian journeys are focussed in our town centres. We will</p>

				therefore need to focus our efforts on these areas.
	3) In its role as public health promoter the County Council should consider providing a self-referral programme for older drivers regarding their fitness to drive	Cllr Ann Naylor, Cabinet Member for Public Health	Disagree	<p>Thorough legislation is in place through the General Medical Council (GMC) and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) that already makes it the responsibility of the driver to refer themselves. There is a programme that already exists for those with visual disorders. Also, we are targeting new general health checks at all over-65s. The Chair of the SCDOP (Strategic Child Death Overview Panel) has said that more needs to be done to stop people driving who are very clearly serious threats to themselves and others regardless of age. An ability of police to prevent further driving may possibly help this. The issue is being discussed centrally.</p>
	4) An information leaflet on how to use Public Transport should be delivered when people are sent concessionary bus passes. There should also be more advertising of the concessionary bus pass	Cllr Rodney Bass, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation	Disagree	<p>ECC has in the past produced a 'how to use the bus' leaflet aimed at a range of potential service users, including those with learning difficulties. While it would be feasible to include a leaflet with new concessionary bus passes, concessionary pass applicants are mainly pre-existing bus users who in general have a good understanding of how bus services operate works. Given an average new issue and renewal rate of around 50,000 passes per year there would also be a sizeable cost to doing so.</p> <p>Furthermore, Essex County Council has adopted a 'Digital by Default' policy, whereby its service information is largely made available through electronic media. In line with this policy other preferred approach would be to make information based on the 'how to use a bus' leaflet available through the County Council's website. This would be</p>

				<p>available to a wider audience including potential new bus users and be relatively low cost.</p> <p>The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme is a major central government programme and has had substantial press coverage both at launch in 2006 and since. Take up in Essex is in line with that for comparable shire counties with similar bus networks (recent statistics show that there of the just over 400,000 eligible older people living in Essex who could take up an ENCTS bus pass, 257,608 hold passes) and there is little evidence that eligible people are unaware of the scheme.</p> <p>Information about the scheme (including hard copy application forms) is already provided on line through the Essex web site and through all Essex libraries (including mobile libraries) as well as County and District Council offices. There is a dedicated local rate phone line and information is provided through citizens advice and older persons services such as Age UK. We successfully trialled a 'road-show' service in December 2013 run by Euclid Ltd who undertake concessionary fares administration on Essex's behalf and are expecting to roll this out over the next year. A web based 'on line' application system is expected to become available for use over the same time frame. Given the profile of the national scheme and the availability of information about the scheme locally, the County Council has no plans to undertake a specific marketing campaign for the scheme at this time.</p>
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	<p>5) All bus stops in the county should enable buses to get to kerbs, as a matter of course, as well as having bus boxes/cages as considered appropriate. The default position should be that all but the lightest use bus stops should be protected by no-stopping restrictions</p>	<p>Cllr Rodney Bass, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation</p>	<p>Disagree due to cost implications</p>	<p>ECC believes that Bus stops should be protected whether by providing bus cages or parking restrictions, thereby allowing easy-access for users. There is some potential sensitivity around marking bus bays, particularly in residential areas as they impede on the ability of some residents to park outside their properties and could be cited as a restriction to trade in commercial areas. There would be a cost associated with a decision to mark all stops in the County; currently there are 1,844 (32%) bus cages at marked bus stops. To provide cages at all marked stops would cost between £3.5 and £4m and would take an estimated 3 years to complete. Recurring costs to re-mark these stops is estimated at £581k per year. Hence, any decision around this policy will need to be made as part of the budget-setting process. ECC's current policy is to deal with individual cases where issues are raised for instance feedback from service users about particular stops will be investigated.</p>
	<p>6) Amendments to the Blue Badge Scheme that exclude social care schemes from having Blue Badges should be reviewed by the Cabinet Member</p>	<p>Cllr John Aldridge, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care.</p> <p>Cllr John Jowers, Cabinet Member for Libraries, Communities and Planning</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>The Department for Transport (DfT) set the criteria by which all local authorities administer their blue badge schemes. In February 2012 the DfT issued new guidance to local authorities reminding them of the criteria to be applied to the issue of organisational badges.</p> <p>DfT guidelines state: <i>An organisational badge may be issued to an organisation for use in a motor vehicle or vehicles when the vehicle or vehicles are to be used to carry disabled people who would themselves be eligible for a badge as specified in Section 4(2) of the 2000 Regulations (SI 2000, No 682) and that they will be using the vehicle solely for the purpose of transporting those people.</i></p>

				<p><i>An 'organisation' is defined in the 2000 Regulations as meaning an organisation concerned with the care of disabled persons to which a disabled person's badge may be issued in accordance with section 21(4) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.</i></p> <p>Essex County Council takes care to follow these guidelines closely, but the Cabinet Member agrees with the recommendation and ECC is working to ensure there is some flexibility in the application of the DfT guidelines so that ECC will consider applications beyond the DfT guidelines on a case by case basis.</p>
	7) The Task and Finish Group heard of innovative schemes in the county related to community and passenger transport and would recommend active, and on-going support and promotion of these; and other innovative schemes should be encouraged	Cllr Rodney Bass, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation	Agreed	ECC strongly support innovative approaches to community and passenger transport issues. ECC is currently undertaking a consultation exercise regarding passenger transport that will reveal priorities for supported bus services and will be used to inform future decisions. During this process, and in the future, ECC will continue to look for innovative solutions to issues of access and reducing funding.
Loneliness and Isolation	8) The Campaign to End Loneliness work being undertaken at the Authority should be brought to the attention of the Health and Wellbeing Board and measures should be taken to address the effects of social isolation on health	Cllr David Finch, Leader of the Council as Chairman of the Health & Wellbeing Board	Agreed	ECC supported the establishment of a <i>Loneliness Group</i> which promotes activities and shares resources and good practice. ECC also used the Campaign to End Loneliness project to raise awareness via the media and elected members as well as ensuring ECC commissioning processes have consideration for the impact of loneliness and social isolation issues. Furthermore the website www.campaigntoendloneliness.org rated Essex's existing Health & Wellbeing strategy as silver, meaning that it demonstrated commitment to learning more about loneliness in the local area or measureable actions/targets on social isolation.

	9) The Community and Older People Policy & Scrutiny Committee should support, and recommend the Authority supports the 'Gold' Campaign to reduce loneliness	Chairman of the Community and Older People Policy & Scrutiny Committee	n/a	
The Voice of Older People	10) The possibility of re-establishing the Older People's Forum, along similar lines to the Young Essex Assembly, should be explored. This should include initial exploratory work to establish the effectiveness of the Fora in operation in Suffolk and Thurrock	Cllr John Aldridge, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care.	Disagree	Whilst we acknowledge the idea behind this proposal, it is felt that an Older People's Forum would be likely to replicate what other partners are developing. Age UK are establishing a county-wide 'Voice' network for older people – this is part of the community agents programme, but it will have a broader role in listening to and reflecting the views of older people. Similarly, Healthwatch also have a role to play in reflecting the experience of older people.. We are concentrating efforts on working with these partners rather than seeking to establish another group. Discussions are also taking place with all stakeholders from planning groups and with the Participation Network Forum (PNF) about the future of citizen and service user engagement.
	11) Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) should differentiate 'old' older people separately on the Age section of the EIA form rather than just have a section on the consideration of age in general	Cllr John Aldridge, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care.		This recommendation will be investigated once a permanent recruitment to diversity and equality manager is completed. Applications are due to close soon for this role.
Health and Wellbeing of Older People	12) A list should be provided, to ascertain all Voluntary and Community Service organisations in Essex which provide services to older people. This would enable the County to highlight the gaps in	Cllr Ann Naylor, Cabinet Member for Public Health	Agreed	Essex County Council supports local infrastructure organisations including Council for Voluntary Services who run the Essex Connects database (essexconnects.org.uk) which is an online system containing details of organisations that provide support for older people.

	provision and be of benefit to the Health and Wellbeing Board			In addition, as part of our new structure, ECC has created 2 new VCS market development specialist roles within our commercial team to provide support to VCS organisations across the County.
	13) The Library Service should be more heavily promoted by Essex County Council in terms of the health, wellbeing and social benefits to older people; and the opportunities for volunteering	Cllr John Jowers, Cabinet Member for Libraries, Communities and Planning	Agreed	There will be a library campaign running in February '14 with the objective to increase foot-fall into libraries. We have already made contact with Age UK and Village Agents to see if they will take leaflets and help promotion. We also promote all the initiatives that the libraries run for a variety of audiences. We currently have a good level of take-up for library services; in 2012-13 we had an average of almost 5000 library visits per year per 1000 residents. This is much higher than an average of around 4000. Furthermore, we are still in the top quartile for physical library visits compared to other Counties.
	14) Any future Essex County Council Lifelong Learning Strategy should go beyond the age of 65 and capture the learning needs of older people	Cllr Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	Agreed	The current Lifelong Learning Strategy states a desire to ensure "a love of learning for all residents, of all ages"; however other areas of the strategy do have a strong emphasis on working-age residents and the economic benefits of lifelong learning. The strategy is due for review annually (next refresh will be July 2014) and this feedback will be used to inform the review process.
	15) The induction sessions for members following the 2 May 2013 elections should include Libraries and Adult Community Learning to raise awareness of the work each does to support, amongst others, older people	Cllr Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, and Cllr John	Agreed	This was implemented following the 2013 elections; a session was run on 30th May. The developing member development programme for 2014 will include aspects on Libraries and Adult services.

		Jowers, Cabinet Member for Libraries, Communities and Planning		
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